WINNING AN ARGUMENT IN THE WORKPLACE  
By: Eleanor B. Feria

We cannot always convince our co-workers with our own viewpoints. We cannot expect a smooth-flowing situation in the office every day, in the process, disagreements arise. Argument happens not only in the office. It happens between friends, but also to husband and wife, parents and children, customers, boss and employee and even between enemies. And the natural reaction is to argue. Why? Well, for the simple reason that we view opposition as a threat to our ego. So, the reaction is to hit back and be hostile. We shout, we ridicule and we do our best to intimidate the other person by forcing our ideas.

But this reaction, no matter how natural it may appear, usually does not make us winner. We may succeed in forcing the other guy to our ways but we will never change his mind this way. His aversion to our idea is still there. In this analysis, we never won her to our side. The saying “nobody ever wins an argument” is very true, if we view argument as an ego battle with all the threats, coercion, force and intimidation rolled into one.

It is normal for us to feel the urge to prove a point. But, we must respect also the divergent views expressed by others. No two people have exactly the same opinions. They will always differ. To make the situation tolerable, we need to exercise tolerance.

Another point to consider is the magic of listening. Listen to his ideas. Let his air his views regarding the issues. Don’t ever, ever interrupt. Remember, he is not ready to listen to your side, so if you are wise, listen to him. His mind is already set that he is right. At the moment, other ideas are not acceptable to him. But, if you let him air his side and get it off his chest, there might be a chance that you can slip your view into his subconscious.
Don’t dream for winning 100 percent – you can’t, you have to concede. The person may have good ideas, too, and you must accept this. Be prepared to give in to some of his ideas. You will definitely profit from this. For, definitely, he will also agree with you on some points, but never on all points.

As Robert Louis Stevenson say: “When you disagree, be an amicable adversary”.

Reference:
	Tapalla, W. Woman’s Home Companion 26 (15):37